

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 113

By Walley

A RESOLUTION relative to memorials for victims of lynching in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, after slavery was formally abolished, lynching emerged as a tool to suppress African-American civil and human rights; and

WHEREAS, more than 4,400 African Americans were lynched across twenty states between the end of Reconstruction in 1876 and 1950; and

WHEREAS, at least 154 African-American Tennesseans lost their lives to racial violence during this period; Mr. Elbert Williams of Haywood County, who died on June 22, 1940, was the last documented lynching victim in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that we address the past to better understand how history shapes the present as we address the challenges of today; and

WHEREAS, the Community Remembrance Project seeks to partner with community groups to memorialize the documented victims of lynching in order to foster meaningful dialogue about race and justice today; and

WHEREAS, this project centers on the erection of historical markers that memorialize a victim or victims of lynching, also including a factual narrative of the event and background information; and

WHEREAS, a better understanding of the history of the post-Reconstruction era is vital to reconciliation and healing as we all collaborate on a better tomorrow; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we request the Tennessee Historical Commission to partner with local

governments and local historical organizations to establish a Community Remembrance Project that memorializes all documented victims of lynching in Tennessee by county of residence.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to the executive director of the Tennessee Historical Commission.